



Summit of Hope helps ex-offenders start over

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One step at a time, Tre Teague is finding a fresh start.

“That’s what I’m doing right now,” he said. “Just taking this first step to better myself for the future.”

That’s why the Rock Island man, 20, came to the Summit of Hope on Wednesday at First Church of the Nazarene.

Poor choices landed Teague in trouble with the law a few years ago. But now he’s getting a second chance and is ready to learn.

“This is a pretty great experience,” he said.

Hosted by the Illinois Department of Corrections and QC Advocates for Offender Success, this is a one-stop shop for turning lives around.

Some 40 agencies came to help. It's already credited as a factor in cutting the return rate to prison in Illinois.

"I know there's a lot more work that we can do," said Marcus King, Illinois Department of Corrections. "But I think it's a pretty good start."

Tre is discovering that this community outreach can offer a new beginning. It's the first step to success.

As he helps to chart a new course for going back to school, it will still take more steps along the way.

"I know Tre will do that," said Dorene Lay, a Henry County probation officer helping him make the rounds. "He's very enthusiastic. He's got a great attitude. That's what it takes."

This is the third year for the event. Similar sessions are held across Illinois during the year.

"It's wonderful," Tre said. "It's nice to see so many local businesses and people so willing to help other people that are not as fortunate."

One step at a time, Tre Teague is determined to succeed.

"Just start a brand new life with positive things," he concluded.

It's a Summit of Hope with plenty of promise.